Football comes home
Dons fans return to Plough Lane

Keep Merton Safe
Protecting our community
As the new school term begins, I’d like to say well done and thank you to pupils and their teachers for persevering with their education throughout the pandemic, while taking measures to keep schools as safe as possible. It has been a tough time for you all, with loved ones getting ill, lockdowns and bubbles interrupting your normal school lives.

I’m really impressed by your determination to succeed and I would like to congratulate everyone who received their exam results over the summer and wish them well as they take their next steps.

It is well-known that we have great schools here in Merton, and the council is proud to help our youngsters become the best they can be, even topping up cash for school meals when Government funding ran out. Addressing education inequalities and ensuring that all our young people have access to opportunities are emerging as key priorities from Your Merton – the biggest consultation the council has ever held.

The pandemic has disproportionately affected young people, many of whom worked in sectors which had to shut down for many months. Creating more employment opportunities for them will be essential in helping our town centres to recover after the pandemic. Also central to the recovery effort are organisations like the Dons Local Action Group, which continues to work tirelessly to support our most vulnerable residents. The group was set up by AFC Wimbledon supporters and it was great to be able to thank some of them personally when I was lucky enough to go to the first AFC Wimbledon game back here in Merton since the completion of their new stadium on Plough Lane. The team are delighted to be back in their rightful home and their foundation has ambitious goals to expand their activities even further into the community.

Council Leader, Councillor Mark Allison, writes for My Merton

Windrush Day

Council Leader, Councillor Mark Allison paid tribute to his late father-in-law, Ram, during a poignant visit to the Windrush exhibition which was held at the Merton Heritage Centre in Morden Library to mark Windrush Day.

Councillor Allison said: “This year marks 73 years since the first of the Windrush Generation arrived on our shores, ready to help rebuild the country after World War II. I can say with some certainty that my life would be drastically different without the Windrush Generation, as my father-in-law, Ram, who passed away last Christmas, was one of the half a million people to make the journey across the Atlantic during the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, in his case to work on the buses here in Merton, and then for the NHS.

“The exhibition was a beautiful reminder of just some of the many ways the Windrush Generation and their descendants have contributed to our public services and our culture. “As a Borough of Sanctuary, Merton will stand up for the rights of migrants and refugees from around the world who work hard for our community, and we will fight discrimination wherever we see it”

Councillor Mark Allison with a photograph of his late father-in-law, Ram
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Celebrating World Car Free Day with Merton Play Streets

Residential roads across Merton will be transformed into Play Streets this September. Selected streets will be closed to traffic so that children can play freely, communities can re-imagine their streets and neighbours can come together to celebrate.

Residents from across the borough have applied to the council to close roads to vehicles for a few hours on Sunday 19 September and on Sunday 26 September as part of World Car Free Day, which is on Wednesday 22 September.

This aims to encourage motorists to make more journeys by bike, on foot, or in public transport, rather than driving. This year, Merton’s Climate Action Group will also be providing Play Streets organisers with ideas and information about how residents can reduce their carbon footprint.

find out more merton.gov.uk/playstreets or search for #MertonPlayStreets on Twitter or Facebook.

Mitcham Bridge

Work on the new Mitcham Bridge in Bishopsford Road, Mitcham, is steadily progressing. This image shows the bridge deck – a significant milestone in the project. The single span river crossing, along the A217, will be wider than the previous three-arch bridge. Replacing the original bridge, which had to be demolished for safety reasons last year after partially collapsing in June 2019, following heavy rainfall, is a particularly complex task because it influences river flow and has a range of utilities running through its structure.

Crimefighting canine

A specialist dog sniffed out 5,000 illegal cigarettes that had been concealed in a shop toilet.

Yo Yo the canine crimefighter hunted out the illegal tobacco concealed in a toilet at a convenience store.

Are you registered to vote?

Residents are being reminded to make sure their voter registration details are up to date, ahead of the council elections next spring.

The council has already contacted everyone by email or post and will be sending reminders to anyone who has not yet responded.

You must respond to these communications if:

• you are asked to by the council
• any of the information that the council has recorded for you is wrong
• there are people at your address who are eligible to register to vote, but are not included in the communication

If you have recently moved home, either into another property in Merton or into the borough, and haven’t done so already, you will need to register to vote at your new address. This is particularly important this year, ahead of the council elections in May 2022.

Residents are encouraged to respond promptly to avoid the need for home visits by electoral services staff.

find out more merton.gov.uk/voting
School expansion could create more places for pupils with autism

More than 80 new school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities, including autistic spectrum disorder, could be created in an empty school building.

Following a public consultation in July, the council’s Cabinet is due to decide this month whether to expand Melrose School in Church Road, Mitcham, onto an additional site in Whatley Avenue, Raynes Park, which would enable the new provision to open from September 2022, eventually providing 80 places.

The former adult education building in Whatley Avenue was temporarily used by the new secondary school, Harris Academy Wimbledon, before it moved to its permanent site in South Wimbledon in autumn 2020.

Melrose School is part of the Melbury College Federation. It already has wide experience of working effectively with vulnerable children including those with medical needs and pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

Although the council has expanded special schools in recent years, it has been unable to keep up with the increasing demand for more school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities, particularly those with autistic spectrum disorder.

Lift The Ban Coalition

In February last year, Merton became a Borough of Sanctuary for asylum seekers and refugees, which includes standing up for them when they face injustice. This led to the Cabinet agreeing to join the Lift the Ban Coalition in June of this year, which is lobbying the Government to give the right to work in any occupation for everyone waiting for more than six months for a decision on their asylum claim.

Alfresco dining served in parklets

To help the hospitality sector to recover from the pandemic, the council has approved 41 new licences for restaurants, bars and cafes to put tables and chairs on the pavement. The council has also supported 12 more businesses with Government grants to provide al-fresco dining. Five parklets have also been created – these reuse parking bays as seating areas and three more are planned.

A section of Wimbledon High Street is pedestrianised on a part-time basis to support the expansion of Wimbledon Village Farmers’ Market.

Top marks for school streets

Environmental campaigners the Healthy Streets Scorecard Coalition named Merton as the London borough with the highest proportion of school streets, with 41 per cent of its schools having traffic restrictions at the start and the end of the school day.

Merton was also praised by the coalition for having 20mph speed limits on most borough roads. It scored highly among outer London councils for low traffic neighbourhoods, which aim to make roads safer and encourage residents to make more journeys on foot or by bike.

New council chief executive

Hannah Doody was formally confirmed as the council’s new Chief Executive, following cross-party endorsement at the Full Council meeting in July.

Hannah has been Director of Community and Housing at the authority for the past four years and also recently took on the role as the council’s interim Director of Children, Schools & Families.

Over the past 18 months, she has played a key role both in Merton and across London in the fight against Covid-19, both as the pan-London lead on personal protective equipment and care home testing, and as the Director of Community and Housing responsible for supporting vulnerable adults across the borough.

Hannah has replaced outgoing Chief Executive Ged Curran, who has retired from Merton after 17 years as its most senior officer.

Hannah said: “I’m immensely proud and privileged to be able to take Merton forward as an organisation, and I look forward to working with our residents, councillors and the fantastic staff and partners for whom I’ve built so much respect over the past four years.”
Support for parents after miscarriage

Merton is one of the first councils in the country to give staff bereavement leave after the early loss of a pregnancy. The council agreed to give mothers and their partners between five and ten days of paid bereavement leave after a miscarriage or a stillbirth.

Currently, mothers who have a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy are entitled to maternity leave, plus two weeks of bereavement leave. However, parents who lose their child before the 24th week of pregnancy have, up until now, had to take sickness leave, annual leave or unpaid leave, as under UK law there is no obligation for employers to give them bereavement leave.

According to the charity the Miscarriage Association, around one in four pregnancies end in miscarriage.

Although many remain hidden, sadly, miscarriages and stillbirths are a lot more common than many people realise. More needs to be done to remove the stigma surrounding them, encourage people to talk openly about their experiences and help grieving parents to get the support they need.

Showing support at Armed Forces Day

A socially-distanced ceremony, led by Deputy Mayor, Councillor Edith Macauley MBE, was held outside Merton Civic Centre to mark Armed Forces Day on 26 June. The event showed the borough’s support for the armed forces, including the men and women currently serving, veterans, reservists and cadets.

£1m neighbourhood fund

There is a total of £1 million available for residents, voluntary organisations and community groups to bid for from the council’s Neighbourhood Fund.

The money comes from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that developers are required to pay to mitigate the impact of their development on the area.

Bids can be made for projects worth at least £20k which can be started during the year ahead and will enhance neighbourhoods and support the aims of the borough’s community plan.

The deadline to submit applications is on 10 September and the Cabinet is due to choose the successful bids in November.
Our Cabinet has approved a funding package worth almost £2 million to support local businesses to recover from the losses they incurred during the pandemic. The support will include approximately £1.4 million in direct grants to micro and small businesses, plus £600,000 for Future Merton, our team responsible for regeneration, to carry out works across the borough that will help businesses to trade more easily.

This latest funding is the third phase of the Additional Restrictions Grant, a scheme funded by the Government which has already seen us distribute almost £6 million. The vast majority of that money has gone directly to local businesses, with 196 companies receiving payments to date. In the first phase, we prioritised businesses that hadn’t yet received any assistance, whilst the second and third phases are aimed at micro and small businesses which can demonstrate a 40% or greater loss of income during the pandemic.

For more information on business support and grants that are available, visit merton.gov.uk/BusinessSupport.
Food, fun and extra funding for young learners

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on communities that were already struggling prior to the pandemic. However, Merton is a great place for families and there is plenty of support available in the borough.

Are you eligible for Pupil Premium?
You may be able to get free school meals and extra funding for your child’s school through the Pupil Premium scheme, if you receive certain benefits.

What it offers
- Funding to the school to support your child
- A saving of hundreds of pounds to you in the cost of school dinners
- Healthy, nutritious food

Check your eligibility and help your school
We are asking all parents and guardians whose children go to school in Merton to register for the Pupil Premium scheme.
For every eligible parent who signs up, the school could be in line for up to £1,320 from the Department for Education to spend on resources such as extra staff, books or school trips. Your child will also have the opportunity to be served free, healthy meals. Research has shown that good nutrition helps children to learn more effectively and achieve more at school.

How to apply
Sign up using the online form, which takes just a few minutes to complete. The council will check your eligibility for the scheme using the Department for Education’s website. The website will only show whether or not you are eligible for the scheme – it does not give us any other information about you or your child.
If your child is eligible for the Pupil Premium scheme, the school will look after everything. They will ask if you would like your child to receive free meals at school and the Pupil Premium funding will automatically be passed to them. The school will be able to tell you how the extra money is being used.

How schools use the extra money
Each school uses the funding in slightly different ways and will publish what they do on their website. Here are some examples of how Merton schools are currently using the money:
- introducing reading and homework clubs
- summer schools to help prepare pupils for the transition between primary and secondary school
- subsidising the cost of school trips or uniform
- paying for extra staff
- providing for small group tuition
- providing a wide range of extra-curricular activities

Apply for Pupil Premium and free school meals: merton.gov.uk/freemeals
Help and support...

**During the school holidays**

Free holiday activities and healthy meals were once again offered to young people in Merton this summer whose families have been most affected by the pandemic.

Children and young people aged between five and 16 were served a healthy meal and learned about nutrition, as well as taking part in a range of fun and educational activities, such as film and media, multisports, drama and dance, cooking, and fashion.

For the last six months, the council has been working with its voluntary sector and youth services partners to increase the number of holiday club places available for children who are eligible for free school meals. Funding for the project was secured from the Department for Education and went towards paying for almost 30 clubs and activities across Merton.

Throughout the pandemic, parents from low-income households have been hit the hardest: more than three-quarters have said they had less money to spend on food. The situation can become even more challenging during the long summer holidays when families whose children usually receive free school meals can struggle. The council is committed to ensuring that these children are supported through the Holiday Activities and Food Programme. Visit: merton.gov.uk/funandfood

**All year round**

- **Childcare costs**: Families who are eligible for Universal Credit may be able to claim back up to 85% of their childcare costs. Visit merton.gov.uk/funandfood to find out more.

- **Merton’s Community Fridge**: To receive a food parcel for yourself or someone else, visit Morden Baptist Church, Crown Lane, Morden, on Wednesdays (4.30–6.30pm) and Thursdays (1.30–3.30pm) when food parcels will be handed out by local Fridge Friends. To request help with getting food from the Fridge, visit sustainablemerton.org/community-fridge to complete a short form.

- **Foodbanks**: There are four foodbank locations in the borough. If you need help, get in touch: call the free national helpline, Help through Hardship, on 0808 2082138 (open Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm, closed on public holidays) to talk confidentially with a trained Citizens Advice adviser.
Moving towards a healthier you

The start of the new academic year is traditionally a time for new beginnings. If you are planning to kickstart some healthier lifestyle changes this September, there is plenty of support available.

During the pandemic, many of our daily routines completely changed. While some people have been able to maintain a nutritious diet and regular exercise, for others, healthy habits lapsed during the lockdowns. If you want to improve your health and wellbeing but are not sure where to begin, Better Health Merton has a range of tips and information. Starting small and making simple changes will help us to feel better as we slowly begin to recover from the pandemic.

**Keeping active**
Whatever your fitness goals, there are lots of great ways to keep active. One You Merton offers tips on getting started or resuming exercise after a break, plus information on the recommended amounts of physical activity that we should all be doing each week.

As well as improving your physical fitness, regular exercise also benefits your mental wellbeing. The key is finding activities that you enjoy.

More people are planning to continue the daily walks they went on during the lockdowns. One You Merton has a free Active 10 app that tracks how much walking you do each day and highlights how much of this is brisk – walking quicker than usual, at a pace that gets your heart pumping faster and makes you feel slightly out of breath.

You can also find a host of great activities to get you moving more at some of our Better Health Merton partners, including Wimbledon Guild, Merton Moves and Age UK Merton.

**Eating healthily**
Maintaining a balanced and healthy diet can improve all aspects of your health, including your energy level, your mood, your ability to fight off diseases and, of course, your weight and stamina.

If you need some fresh ideas for healthy recipes, the free Smart Recipe app from Change4Life has a range of nutritious meal ideas. We all love tasty food, but it is not always easy to cook for the family if you are short on time and the kids are picky.

Remembering to buy all the ingredients and keeping track of portion sizes can be a hassle, but the Meal Mixer feature in the app will take care of that for you.

**Drink free days**
Do you like a drink but want some help tracking what you actually drink and cutting down a bit? You’re not alone – it is common for people to underestimate how much they drink. To understand more about your current drinking and risk levels, download the free app: Drink Free Days.

Health guidelines recommend that we all take at least three days off drinking alcohol per week, so simply pledge and nominate a specific number of drink free days each week and get practical, daily support to help you stick to it and successfully reach your goals. Cutting down on the booze can help you to save money, lose weight and feel happier and healthier.
Some pupils will be relishing the chance to spend more time with their friends and resume their studies as summer holidays come to a close, whereas others will potentially have some anxiety and nervousness about returning to the classroom. We want to reassure all Merton pupils and their parents that schools have been doing everything they can to put protective measures in place to minimise the risk of Covid-19, now that we have emerged from lockdown.

Schools work as a key point of contact for public health and safeguarding services, particularly for vulnerable children or those from low-income families, as well as a place where we learn, grow and often make friends for life.

Schools will reopen with reduced Covid-19 restrictions, in line with national guidance. However, it is crucial to follow precautionary measures like getting plenty of fresh air into school buildings, regular testing, vaccinations, frequent handwashing and other preventative measures to keep everyone safe.

If an outbreak does happen in a school, then they will work closely with Public Health Merton and Public Health England to ensure the necessary arrangements are made to minimise the spread and keep pupils and staff safe.

The Covid-19 vaccination programme is now open to anyone aged 16 and above. That means if you are 16 or older then you can now book your vaccine or attend one of the walk-in sessions across the borough. The vaccination programme has proved vital in lifting us out of lockdown, and with the cohort now open to older pupils, we encourage all parents and eligible pupils to get both doses of the vaccine to keep themselves, their colleagues and their loved ones safe.

As well as getting vaccinated, making sure we are all still testing regularly for Covid-19 is hugely important as pupils start to return to schools. All secondary schools in the borough will be providing twice-weekly tests for staff and pupils. Primary schools will offer all staff tests twice a week. Getting tested is the only way to be sure you’re not spreading the virus, as not everyone has symptoms.

There will be additional support for catch-up studies, funded by the Government, for any children who may have fallen behind due to Covid-19. Mental health support will be offered to children who have been adversely affected during the pandemic.

After the disruption to their schooling that all pupils have faced during the last 18 months, it is more important than ever that their education goes back to normal. From the beginning of the autumn term, school attendance is compulsory and any holidays must be taken out of term time.
Regular testing in the community

As we start to resume our normal activities while learning to live alongside the virus, testing continues to be an important part of preventing transmission of Covid-19, whether or not you have any symptoms.

Esme Impey is the Site Manager for Merton Community Covid-19 Testing. The community testing team ensure residents in the borough have access to regular rapid lateral flow tests, working closely with various businesses, organisations, pharmacies and faith groups.

There are several ways for people who live and work in Merton to get a free, rapid Covid-19 test, including booking a supervised test, collecting home test kits from one of the community test sites, or getting tests delivered straight to your door.

Esme, who has been in her role since January, said: “Regular testing is important because anyone can carry the virus, even when double vaccinated. As we have seen lately in the news, we can still get poorly or pass the virus to vulnerable family or friends.”

Reflecting on the past year, Esme said: “It has been very busy. We’ve run multiple sites across the borough, helping the local communities to access testing regularly. We have also worked with outreach settings, including the Merton vaccination centres, supporting them and providing home self-test kits for the public to take away to continue the testing from home. We also supported testing at the Wimbledon Tennis Championship, helping those who would not have been able to access the event without a negative test with us. As a team we have thoroughly enjoyed our work here in Merton.”

The main challenges have been ensuring that they have staff in areas of most need. Esme said: “I feel with our outreach projects that we have always gone above and beyond in trying to help everyone, from answering questions people may have about vaccines or testing, to ensuring they are able to get home safely and helping with general day to day issues. We always aim to give the most up-to-date government guidelines and information.”

To book a local, rapid lateral flow test, visit: merton.gov.uk/coronavirus/test
For an NHS symptomatic test, visit: www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test
This month, the NHS in Merton will begin a new phase of the Covid-19 vaccine rollout as people in eligible groups are invited for their third booster dose of the vaccine. They will be offered the flu vaccine at the same time, giving extra protection for winter. As before, the programme will move through the age groups until all eligible groups have been offered a booster.

Meanwhile, anyone who hasn’t had their first or second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine can still come forward and be immunised. The clinical lead for the Covid-19 vaccinations in Merton, Mohammad Hassan-Ally said: “It’s never too late.”

A qualified pharmacist, normally to be found in community chemists and GP practices, the past few months have been a whirlwind of activity for Mohammad.

“At our busiest, we were doing 2,500 vaccinations a day at the Wilson Hospital in Mitcham. That slowly went down during the summer, but we are still seeing people come in for first doses – which is fantastic because we know they’ll be back for their second. We are even getting some elderly people – just yesterday I vaccinated an 80-year-old.”

According to Mohammad, misinformation about the vaccine is still out there, along with a perception among the under 30s that they’re invincible. He said: “They think that if they have Covid-19, they’ll recover pretty quickly, but they don’t understand the consequences or the effects of long Covid symptoms, which can be profound.”

For many younger people, the promise of hassle-free travel has been the persuading factor. For others it has been the passage of time. Mohammad said: “We started vaccinating in December. A lot of people have had the vaccine with no lasting side effects, it’s long enough to have seen family and friends get the vaccine; to have confidence.”

If you haven’t had your first or second dose vaccine yet, book online at nhs.uk/coronavirusvaccine, by calling 119 or at a walk-in clinic swlondonccg.nhs.uk/covid-walk-in-clinics.
Information Fair

Pop in to find out how to stay warm and well this winter

Free refreshments & brownies
Free thermometer & information pack

Wednesday 13th October
2.30-4.30pm
Wimbledon Library

Visit www.warmandwellinmerton.co.uk for updates & more information
A hub of helping hands

The recovery from the pandemic is beginning, but, for many of us, there is a long journey ahead as we learn to live with the virus while coming to terms with the impact that Covid-19 has had on our lives. *My Merton* finds out about the support which is available in the community.

As life returns to something like normal, some people have quickly embraced their regained freedoms, while others are choosing to take things at a more gradual pace or need extra support. Many people are still grieving the loss of loved ones, recovering from Covid-19 or facing financial or mental health issues, including anxiety about the virus, which is continuing to circulate. If you, or someone you know needs support, there is plenty of help available from voluntary and community organisations.

The Merton Community Hub

This is run by our voluntary sector partners Age UK Merton, Wimbledon Guild and Merton Connected (previously MVSC). It directly provides help to people in need and connects residents to the support from a range of organisations in the borough. Support includes:

- Help with shopping or errands
- Advice on financial issues
- Befriending for lonely or isolated residents
- Support to remain independent at home
- Mental health support

The Merton Community Hub is available Monday to Friday between 10am–4pm. They have launched a new website: mertoncommunityhub.org.uk, telephone number 020 8066 4086 and email address: help@mertoncommunityhub.org.uk

Staying Warm & Well

The Warm & Well in Merton campaign is a partnership between the council, Wimbledon Guild, Age UK Merton and the not-for-profit organisation Thinking Works. It supports residents to stay well all-year-round, including:

- Giving talks to community groups and distributing information packs, which include a free thermometer
- Thinking Works provides energy saving advice, plus free devices to help reduce water and energy use
- Age UK Merton offers free, confidential advice on pensions, welfare benefits, social care, health, housing, transport and more
- Wimbledon Guild provide grants to help eligible residents with fuel costs, bedding, food and appliances
- The council’s handyperson scheme helps residents with minor jobs in their homes, such as changing lightbulbs or replacing batteries in smoke alarms

*find out more*

www.warmandwellinmerton.co.uk or call 020 8648 5792
What does it mean to the club to finally have your fans in the new stadium?
It means everything to the club, The Dons Trust, and more importantly the fans! There are many fans who last saw their team play a football match in Merton over 30 years ago at our previous stadium on Plough Lane, and many more who will be watching AFC Wimbledon play in Merton for the first time.

Is the stadium finished?
The stadium is very close to being finished; the pitch and stands are ready, meaning we’re able to play matches. The finishing touches to our external boundary wall and a five-a-side pitch are the final parts that are in the process of being completed.

How will the stadium benefit the local community?
Apart from bringing elite sport back to the borough, which will bring increased trade for local traders on a matchday, more importantly the stadium can act as a catalyst for school and community sport development. The stadium represents much more than just sport. The club’s foundation will be based at the stadium and will be undertaking a range of community programmes and activities, such as walking football, primary schools’ sports provision and a meeting hub for resident associations and other community groups. Our vision is to provide support, whether it’s through the stadium facility or programmes, to all community groups within the borough.

AFC Wimbledon is a community club, what have you been doing to support the local area during the pandemic?
The pandemic has hit everyone in the community hard. The Dons Local Action Group, which was set up by a group of AFC Wimbledon supporters, has amassed a fantastic group of volunteers from all areas of the community. They have been doing incredible work supporting the most vulnerable residents in Merton and neighbouring boroughs and their work will continue beyond the pandemic. The AFC Wimbledon Foundation have continued their community-based activities for local people, including at schools in Merton, and the surrounding areas. In addition, our new event space at Plough Lane is being used by the NHS as a Covid-19 vaccination centre.

What’s next for AFC Wimbledon?
We’ve just started the season and have finally been able to welcome our brilliant fans into the new stadium, they have been sorely missed by the squad and everyone at the football club. We have very ambitious management and playing staff, including some exciting new signings over the summer, and they have all been working hard in training to be ready for this current season. Away from the pitch, we are continuing to bolster our non-matchday activities and ensuring the stadium is working 365 days a year for its community, including community sports activities, corporate events, as well as the museum and tours.

“There are many fans who last saw their team play a football match in Merton over 30 years ago.”
Teaming up to support the community

The Dons Local Action Group was set up by AFC Wimbledon in March 2020, and was soon joined by hundreds of fans and non-fans alike. My Merton finds out how they have been supporting our community through the pandemic and their goals for the future to reduce poverty in our community.

Since the Dons Local Action Group was created at the start of the pandemic, with the aim of keeping our community fed, connected and supported against poverty, they have recruited a team of volunteers who have provided vital help for our most vulnerable residents.

What began as a single trestle table outside a supermarket in Wimbledon town centre, quickly grew into a network of partners across the community.

The Keep Kids Connected initiative began about three weeks later, by appealing for donations for laptops. These are refurbished by IT specialists and distributed to schools to give to pupils to bridge the digital divide.

Volunteers quickly assembled to pack and deliver food parcels to vulnerable residents facing financial hardship. Food boxes containing enough supplies for a week are distributed to people referred by external agencies and emergency packages can be delivered within an hour. The food, which includes fresh fruit and vegetables as well as store cupboard essentials, is donated by supermarket customers at stalls set up at stores. Donor partners also make bulk donations of specific groceries and others provide storage space on their premises.

A significant amount of food donations are passed on to other community organisations, including the Fresh Foodbank in Pollards Hill and the Polish Family Association, to distribute to families in need.

The Dons Local Action Group, which is part of the AFC Wimbledon Foundation and a registered charity, has also been helping residents facing furniture poverty. They collect donations of good-quality essential home furniture, including sofas, desks, beds frames and white goods like fridge freezers. These are checked and then taken to new homes.

The Dons Local Action Group now distributes an average of £150,000 worth of food, furniture and laptops each month to vulnerable people in our communities.

Volunteer

The Dons Local Action Group’s biggest goal is to find new volunteers to carry on the work of the last 18 months and help to relieve poverty in uncertain times. As life returns to comparative normality and many of the original volunteers return to work, the Dons Local Action Group urgently needs help to collect food donations at supermarkets across the borough. Shifts are three hours long and the commitment is flexible - volunteers can help out a few times a week or once a month. Volunteer drivers are also needed to collect and distribute donations.

Donate

You can donate pre-loved furniture, white goods or laptops. Fundraise with us - Gift Aid options are available to increase the value of your donation online.

How you can support the team

Volunteer

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Keeping our community fed, connected & supported.

Dons Local Action Group

Since the Dons Local Action Group was created at the start of the pandemic, with the aim of keeping our community fed, connected and supported against poverty, they have recruited a team of volunteers who have provided vital help for our most vulnerable residents.

What began as a single trestle table outside a supermarket in Wimbledon town centre, quickly grew into a network of partners across the community.

The Keep Kids Connected initiative began about three weeks later, by appealing for donations for laptops. These are refurbished by IT specialists and distributed to schools to give to pupils to bridge the digital divide.

Volunteers quickly assembled to pack and deliver food parcels to vulnerable residents facing financial hardship. Food boxes containing enough supplies for a week are distributed to people referred by external agencies and emergency packages can be delivered within an hour. The food, which includes fresh fruit and vegetables as well as store cupboard essentials, is donated by supermarket customers at stalls set up at stores. Donor partners also make bulk donations of specific groceries and others provide storage space on their premises.

A significant amount of food donations are passed on to other community organisations, including the Fresh Foodbank in Pollards Hill and the Polish Family Association, to distribute to families in need.

The Dons Local Action Group, which is part of the AFC Wimbledon Foundation and a registered charity, has also been helping residents facing furniture poverty. They collect donations of good-quality essential home furniture, including sofas, desks, beds frames and white goods like fridge freezers. These are checked and then taken to new homes.

The Dons Local Action Group now distributes an average of £150,000 worth of food, furniture and laptops each month to vulnerable people in our communities.

How you can support the team

Volunteer

The Dons Local Action Group’s biggest goal is to find new volunteers to carry on the work of the last 18 months and help to relieve poverty in uncertain times. As life returns to comparative normality and many of the original volunteers return to work, the Dons Local Action Group urgently needs help to collect food donations at supermarkets across the borough. Shifts are three hours long and the commitment is flexible – volunteers can help out a few times a week or once a month, Volunteer drivers are also needed to collect and distribute donations.

Donate

You can donate pre-loved furniture, white goods or laptops. Fundraise with us – Gift Aid options are available to increase the value of your donation online.
Fostering is one of the most rewarding and inspiring jobs that you can do. Many of our foster carers foster with us for decades, like Lynne and Arif Ashgar, who have fostered more than 100 children in Merton, ranging from newborn babies to teenagers, over more than 30 years. Earlier this year they won the Foster Care Award at the Community Star & Care Awards.

Lynne said: “We wanted to make a difference to children and young people’s lives. Fostering can be challenging, but it is incredibly rewarding too when you see the changes you can help make to children’s lives. Our birth children have been very supportive of us fostering and our youngest daughter, Jasmine, who is 24, was born into our foster family.”

This summer, the Mockingbird Family Model™ took flight in Merton to offer foster carers extra support. The initiative is based on the idea of an extended family and offers foster carers more opportunities for respite, as well as training and social activities. There is a central hub which supports between six to 18 foster children and their carers and is also linked to their birth families and the council’s fostering team.

This year, the council urgently needs to find 20 new foster families. We are looking for anyone who has a spare bedroom and the passion and commitment to help change a child’s life to get in touch and find out more.

Many people rule themselves out before finding out more about fostering, but the only pre-requisites are to be aged over 21 and have a spare bedroom. You can foster whether you are employed, on benefits, single, married, rent or own your property. There is no upper age limit on who can apply to foster and we encourage people from all faiths, any background and from the LGBTQ communities to apply to foster. Full support is provided, including a dedicated social worker and a mentor during the first year. Merton foster carers receive up to £514 per week, per child, plus an additional £500 grant when you start fostering. You will also receive an allowance for foster children’s birthdays, religious festivals and to take them on holiday.

We host two virtual Fostering Information Sessions per month, with one of our experienced foster carers, an assessing social worker and our recruitment officer. These cover what fostering is, why children come into care, what makes a good foster carer, the assessment process and the support you will receive. There is no need to book in advance, simply join the call.

find out more Call 020 8545 4070
Visit merton.gov.uk/fostering
Facebook: Merton Fostering
Whether your children were home schooling, attending class or a mixture of both, they have been supported by their school’s staff throughout the pandemic.

Merton is a great place for families and many choose to make their home in the borough because of the high standard of education that our schools provide. Since the start of the pandemic, our dedicated teachers and support staff have worked tirelessly to support families. Their dedication, innovation and care has ensured that their pupils have been able to continue learning through the most difficult of circumstances.

Celebrating exam success
Our teachers also stepped up at a crucial period when they had to provide centre assessment grades for their students. Thanks to this dedication, thousands of students received their A Level, GCSE and other course results in August, the culmination of many months’ hard work from both them and their teachers.

Schools and colleges across the borough have had some great successes and staff will continue to support pupils as they take their next steps.

Apply to a Merton school
If your child is due to start reception class or move to secondary school in September 2022, you can apply for a school place now.

Admissions deadlines
- Primary school: 15 January 2021
- Secondary school: 31 October 2021

If you’re getting ready to make your application, here are some tips from the council’s school admissions team:

- Maximise your chances of getting a school you’re happy with by using all six of your preferences, rather than just listing one school
- Be realistic – consider schools which are closest to where you live. Read the application booklets carefully, paying attention to each school’s individual criteria. Be aware of how places were offered in the past – if you live 700m from a school and it’s never been offered beyond 400m, you’re unlikely to get a place
- Attend open days with your child – don’t rely on Ofsted reports, league tables or what you’ve heard other families saying. Different children thrive in different environments
- Remember that you must apply for a place by the deadline, regardless of whether your child has siblings at one of your preferred schools or attends nursery there

find out more merton.gov.uk/admissions

Back to school...for adults too!
September marks the start of a new term for Merton’s adult education courses. There are a range of courses available, whether you want to learn a new skill or take up a new hobby. Choose from subjects including painting, clothes making, playing the guitar or public speaking. There are also specific courses for people with learning difficulties, aimed at helping participants to live independently, find employment, make friends and develop new interests.

find out more merton.gov.uk/adultlearning
The restoration of Canons House & Grounds

The building works to restore Grade II* listed Canons House are now complete, and its unique heritage features preserved for years to come. *My Merton* finds out about its heritage, the new additions to the 17th century house and the works to the surrounding landscape.

Built in 1680 and nestled in former monastic lands, Canons House is one of Merton’s hidden gems. Though many different tenants let the house over the years, it remained under the ownership of the same family (the Cranmers and their descendants) until it was purchased by the local authority in 1939. Now, it will be opened up to welcome visitors from the local area and further afield.

The project has been made possible thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery Community Fund and, as well as the restoration works, includes a programme of community activities, which will run until December 2022. Canons House & Grounds is set to be a thriving community hub, complete with a café, public toilets and community interpretation space. The interpretation space will include exhibits celebrating the site’s fascinating heritage, as well as areas for community groups to use for activities and meetings.

Canons House & Grounds has a rich sporting and horticultural history. It is home to a 1920s running track, which was once home to the renowned Mitcham Athletics Club. Many record holders and Olympic medalists trained here, including Dorothy Tyler, who won silver medals for high jump in both the 1936 and 1948 Olympic Games. Over the years, areas of the grounds were also used as orchards and allotments, and the walled garden we see today was once part of a much larger garden for growing fruits and vegetables for the estate. Canons House & Grounds is also home to many wonderful trees from across the world, including the majestic Cedar of Lebanon which sits between the house and pond.
AREAS TO ENJOY TODAY

The pond has been cleaned and replanted to create a wildlife haven and a relaxing spot for visitors to enjoy, whilst also taking in the beautiful view of Canons House.

A new children's play area is open for children to explore and there is a new community garden for growing fruits and vegetables. The running track has been restored and is open and well used by locals for exercise. There is extensive new planting across the site, which includes both formal schemes, such as in the walled garden, and wildflower meadows.

COMMUNITY FACILITY

The regeneration will provide excellent opportunities for the community to learn about the site’s history and to take part in the activities programme. Activities, events and volunteering opportunities will be advertised on the website, www.thecanonsmitcham.co.uk, newsletter (sign up via the website) and Instagram.
Let’s keep Merton green and clean

With fly-tipping on the rise across the country, *My Merton* finds out what we can all do to keep Merton clean and take pride in our borough.

Fly-tipping is a national issue and not unique to Merton. Over the last four years, we have seen the level of fly-tipping in the borough almost double from 9,000 recorded incidents in 2017 to almost 16,000 last year, with an estimated £900,000 cost to the council.

No one likes to see fly-tipping where they live – dumped fridges and freezers on the side of the street, discarded black bags left next to street bins or litter thrown on the floor. All of this encourages rats, triggers public health issues, takes time and money to remove and makes our streets an unpleasant place for everyone.

What we are doing to crack down on dumped rubbish

- We clear 96% of reported fly-tips within 24 hours
- We have zero tolerance to fly-tipping – between January and June 2021, our enforcement team issued 182 fixed penalty notices to people who had fly-tipped rubbish or discarded their waste
- Weekly inspections take place across the borough, which amounts to more than 35,000 inspections a year. These take place borough-wide, but are often focused on areas that are known to have rubbish dumped on the streets

Anti-litter poster competition

Well done to Kaja for winning her school’s anti-litter poster competition! Lonesome Primary School in Grove Road, Mitcham, asked students to design a poster encouraging everyone in the school to bin their litter. The winning entry, chosen by our Cabinet Member for Local Environment and Green Spaces, Councillor Natasha Irons, had a catchy strapline and bold colours.

We were so impressed with Kaja’s creation that we are launching a borough-wide Keep It Clean poster competition and are asking schoolchildren to get involved. Open for entries from five to 11-year-olds who live or go to school in Merton, we want young people to design a colourful, unique and inspiring anti-litter poster that will encourage people to use litter bins or take their rubbish home with them.

Competition rules

- You must be aged between five and 11 years old
- You must live or go to school in Merton
- The poster must be A4 size
- The poster must include an anti-litter slogan

How to enter

To enter the competition, send the finished design to communications@merton.gov.uk by Friday 15 October 2021 and include:

- your name
- your age
- the name of your school and the area you live in

The winning design will be used around the borough to promote our anti-litter message.
**DISPOSE OF YOUR WASTE RESPONSIBLY**

- Always use litterbins or take your rubbish home
- Report fly-tipping and fly-tippers, noting times, dates and vehicle registration numbers
- Make the most of your kerbside recycling and rubbish collection service, or book a visit to the Household Reuse and Recycling Centre, in Garth Road, Morden
- Arrange to have large items collected from your home using our bulky waste collection service
- Sell or donate unwanted items via charity shops, eBay, Gumtree or Freecycle. Remember: leaving items outside a closed charity shop is fly-tipping

**KEEP IT CLEAN**

**RECYCLING ON THE GO**

In 2019, an estimated eight billion drink bottles and cans went to waste in the UK - a staggering amount. That is why we are working with Sustainable Merton and Hubbub, with the support of local organisations, including Love Wimbledon, to make on-street recycling even easier. Look out for the 50 colourful #InTheLoop bins to recycle your plastic bottles and drinks cans and prevent them from ending up in the general waste or just being dropped on the ground.

**BEWARE THE MAN WITH A VAN**

The council’s litter enforcement team is also reminding residents how important it is to dispose of bulky waste properly. If someone offers to dispose of your building waste or other rubbish, make sure they have a waste carrier’s licence, which should be displayed in their vehicle. Householders remain responsible for their waste, even if they have given it to someone else to dispose of. If your rubbish ends up being fly-tipped, you could be fined £5,000 and be landed with a criminal record.

**KEEP YOUR STREETS CLEAN**

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Our borough’s journey to net-zero carbon

Since declaring a climate emergency, it has been one of the council’s top priorities to reduce carbon emissions, both within the organisation and in the borough as a whole. *My Merton* finds out what simple changes we can all make to reduce our carbon footprint.

As part of our Climate Strategy and Action Plan, we aim to make the council a net-zero carbon organisation by 2030, and to make Merton a net-zero carbon borough by 2050. Reaching our net-zero carbon goals will require a huge effort from everyone in the borough. Throughout 2021, we’ll be encouraging everyone in Merton to join the effort to make the borough carbon neutral. Each month, we’ll be highlighting a different theme, looking at ways we can all tackle climate change. If you’re inspired to make a difference, you can pledge to make one or more changes – some big, some small – to your routines and habits.

Here’s a look at some of the themes we’ll be focusing on in the coming months:

**September**

**Reducing car use**

The use of petrol and diesel vehicles in the borough makes up 19% of Merton’s emissions, as a result of the 600 million kilometres driven in Merton each year. Throughout September, we’ll be looking at ways we can reduce our reliance on polluting vehicles. We’ll be showing residents how to request new electric car charging points, looking at local bike and car share schemes, and highlighting the air quality benefits of reduced road traffic.

**October**

**Heating and powering our homes**

Energy used to heat and power residential buildings in the borough makes up around 46% of carbon emissions in Merton’s greenhouse gas inventory. In October, we’ll focus on how we can heat and power our homes more efficiently. As we move into winter, we’ll be raising awareness of local fuel poverty services, solar panel group buying schemes, and green energy providers.

**Get involved**

You can explore each month’s theme and make your own pledges at [merton.gov.uk/ClimatePledges](http://merton.gov.uk/ClimatePledges). Don’t worry if you’re not interested by the current month’s theme, you can still make pledges from previous themes at any time of the year.
Driving parking payments into the digital age

Contactless parking payments have almost doubled since the start of the pandemic and now the council is switching from pay and display to digital to make paying for parking quicker, easier and more convenient for motorists.

This summer we began to modernise our parking infrastructure, including the installation of 78 new payment terminals to replace the most frequently used pay and display machines. The new terminals have bigger screens, and allow for contactless payment.

As part of the programme, we’ll also be removing around 350 under-used pay and display parking machines. Most of the changes are due to come into effect in October, although some machines will be taken out of use before then.

If you’re someone who has previously used our pay and display machines, you will instead be able to pay using the RingGo system – already used for around 76% of parking payments in Merton – which allows you to complete your transaction by phone, text message, or through a smartphone app. Drivers can easily extend their stay without needing to return to their vehicle. Anyone unable to pay for their parking using RingGo will still be able to make cash payments at any local shops which offer the PayPoint service.

There will still be payment machines across the borough – new updated pay and display machines will be installed in the 78 locations where they are used the most.

Our decision to move to a predominantly digital system comes as the usage of pay and display machines declines. In total, 268 machines across the borough take less than £2,000 cash in a year, and 171 take less than £1,000. This equates to less than £5 per day from the machines that take up to £2,000 and £2.80 per day from machines taking less than £1,000. This means that it costs the council more to maintain and empty the machines than the amount of money they bring in.

Meanwhile, the uptake in online payments has increased from 43% in 2018/19 to 76% in 2021, and we anticipate further take up of approximately 20% over the coming years.

If you’ve not used RingGo before, it’s a good idea to familiarise yourself with the system before these changes take full effect. Full information on the project, and instructions on how to pay for parking via RingGo can be found at: merton.gov.uk/ParkingMachineUpgrade
Wimbledon resident
‘I have a sense of belonging there.’

Colliers Wood resident
‘Proximity to green spaces and Deen City farm. Great selection and variety of shopping – all very accessible. The local library!’

Mitcham resident
‘Transport links are fantastic; there is a local park for exercise and my neighbours are great.’

Wimbledon resident
‘I have a sense of belonging there.’
Our future Merton

Thousands of people took part in the biggest conversation the council has ever held. My Merton finds out how your views will help to shape the future of our borough.

A big thank you to everyone who has joined the Your Merton conversation. We engaged with over 2,300 people and listened to their views on living, working or studying in the borough.

We asked for your views on:

- **Your places** – Where you call home. The places you meet your friends and family. Places that you feel are at the heart of your local community
- **Your daily life** – How you feel about and spend time in the part of the borough you live, work or study in
- **Work and study** – Understanding more about your thoughts and experiences of living, working or studying in Merton
- **Your experience of the pandemic** – How you spent your time closer to home and the impact of Covid-19 on your life
- **Your future Merton** – How does the future of our borough look?

We ran an online survey, complete with an interactive map for people to pinpoint places which are significant to them. A series of discussion groups were also held with organisations including faith groups, young peoples’ groups, charities and community partners to ensure that we reached groups who may not always take part in the council’s consultations. In the spring, we carried out our bi-annual residents’ survey – a random sample of people from across the borough.

The early indications are that, with the easing of lockdown, some of the habits formed over the last 18 months are here to stay. People have become much more socially minded, kept an eye out for each other and showed that they care, particularly for the most vulnerable people in their area. Neighbours are better connected and local facilities are being used in new ways to support the community.

All of the responses that we received will be drawn together and published, with an action plan, in the autumn. We want to make sure local people’s views, experiences and ideas are central in creating a vision for the future of our borough that everyone can get behind.

Raynes Park resident

‘It’s got the best developments of the 21st century without totally losing its original identity – a friendly Edwardian commuter village.’

Morden resident

‘The best thing about living in the centre of Morden is that it has excellent public transport links, supermarket branches within walking distance, a nice range of friendly corner shops and two great parks also within walking distance.’

Find out more
merton.gov.uk/YourMerton
Living Well with St Raphael’s

Living well and being able to do the things that make life enjoyable is so important to all of us. When you have a condition that impacts your health, it is not always an easy thing to be able to do.

On May 19th, St Raphael’s will be launching The Living Well programme, which focuses on health promotion and wellbeing in an informal, friendly environment. The eight-week programme can be accessed by anyone with a life limiting or long-term condition, their relative/carer. Sessions include; nutrition, how to improve sleep, relaxation, management of breathlessness and anxiety, as well as information about benefits, other practical support and an opportunity to socialise.

We are aware how easy it is to feel isolated and disconnected from everyday things when you are not feeling at your best. It can also be difficult to find the services that will support you and those that are important to you. Sheila, Simon and Katie are inviting you to visit the Wellbeing Centre and to access the Living Well Programme.

You can contact us directly at St Raphael’s Wellbeing Centre on 020 8099 1722 or Email: wellbeingcentre@straphaels.org.uk

How you can help

One of the great positives to be taken from this last very difficult period is how our community has rallied round to support neighbours, the NHS and charities, including St Raphael’s. This is such a hopeful sign for the future and something precious we must make every effort to encourage even after the crisis has receded.

There are many ways that local people support St Raphael’s with volunteering. Some offer practical help with administration or by using their specialist skills, like IT or gardening; others volunteer in our shops or by driving the van. We have many volunteer roles within our Fundraising Team and we hope to grow a team of lottery volunteers to help raise the funds we need every year.

If you could help support us by volunteering in any capacity, please get in touch, by calling 020 8099 7777, and we can talk about the opportunities and the training offered.
A source of inspiration

The Wandle has influenced the work of generations of writers and artists. *My Merton* considers some of those who have found solace, beauty and creative inspiration from this much-loved river.

The largest river in south west London, the Wandle, has long been popular for trout fishing. It was a particular favourite of Izaak Walton, author of *The Compleat Angler* and features heavily in his pioneering 1593 textbook, which is still in print today.

Poetry fans can find references to the Wandle in a variety of famous poems, including *Poly-Olbion* by Tudor poet Michael Drayton, a contemporary of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. Rudyard Kipling’s *Moon of Other Days* compares the Wandle to the Sutlej river in the Punjab and, in his 1944 poem *South London Sketch*, John Betjeman also wrote of the area *Where the waters of the Wandle do Lugubriously flow*.

According to leading Victorian writer and art critic, John Ruskin: *No clearer or diviner waters ever sang with constant lips of the land which giveth rain from heaven.*

His views on the Wandle were certainly shared by fellow artist and writer, William Morris. In 1881 he established the successful Arts and Crafts works at a site just off Merton High Street. The pure waters of the Wandle were ideally suited to the bleaching and printing of fabrics. Many of Morris’s carpet, tapestry and fabric designs, including the striking Wandle Chintz, were influenced by the flowers and wildlife he saw along the river bank. The picturesque Merton surroundings also inspired William’s literary work, including the poem *Golden Wings*.

The Wandle has also featured in a range of novels. In his famous work *War of the Worlds*, H G Wells depicted a Martian invasion of England and the deadly vegetation that followed in its wake, describing how Wimbledon particularly had suffered. *The Wandle, the Mole, every little stream was a heaped mass of red weed.*

Many of the books and poems featured in this article can be borrowed from Merton libraries. Discover more about the history of the river at Merton Heritage Centre, or visit: merton.gov.uk/heritage or merton.gov.uk/memories

**Black History Month**

Our libraries will be celebrating Black History Month, which runs throughout October.

- Travel writer Noo Saro-Wiwa, who wrote *Looking For Transwonderland: Travels in Nigeria*, will be at Wimbledon Library on Thursday 28 October at 6pm.
- Storytelling and discussions about black history and its rich cultural heritage will be part of a community day with BAME Voice. The event will also include displays, arts and crafts, music and dancing. The event will be held in Wimbledon Library on Saturday 30 October between 10am–5pm.

[find out more](merton.gov.uk/Libraries)

**Wandle Fortnight**

11-26 September

For details of events celebrating the environment and heritage of the River Wandle and its surroundings, including Mitcham Heritage Day on 11 September, visit: [www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk/wandle-fortnight.html](http://www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk/wandle-fortnight.html) and [mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk/mitcham-heritage-day](http://mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk/mitcham-heritage-day)
Help the NHS and social care services by returning unused equipment

If you have items such as a bath lift, shower chair, or perching stool, which are no longer needed, please arrange a free collection by Croydon Community Equipment Service, which works in partnership with Merton Council. Your unused equipment will be safety checked and deep cleaned, so that it can be used to help someone else live more independently.

To arrange a free collection, email cesadmin@croydon.gov.uk or call 020 8664 8860

MERTON COUNCIL

Musical Fireworks Displays

Wimbledon Park
Fri 5 November

Morden Park
Sat 6 November

Gates open 5:15pm | first show 6:30pm*
Second show 8:15pm | funfair, stalls & refreshments open till 10pm
*More suitable for young children

Big savings when you buy in advance online at: merton.gov.uk/fireworks

Please note: The public are not permitted to bring any fireworks, alcohol or dogs to these events.

THE SW17CH

BRAND NEW 1, 2 & 3 BEDROOM APARTMENTS AVAILABLE WITH SHARED OWNERSHIP*

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*Shared Ownership – Terms and conditions apply. This scheme is subject to qualifying criteria and status. Minimum and maximum share values will apply and rent is payable on the unfurnished share. Only available on selected properties. It is not offered with any other promotion unless by special arrangement by us. Please speak to a member of our Sales Team for more details. June 2021.
Be Fearless about reporting crime

Young people are urged to be fearless about reporting crime through a website that does not ask them for any personal details. The council and Merton Police have partnered with Crimestoppers to raise awareness of Fearless, the charity’s youth branch, which enables young people to report crime 100 per cent anonymously. Fearless also provides information about different types of crime and its consequences, as well as signposting to other charities and partners for young people who have been victims of crime or involved in criminal activity.

Community safety survey

Safer Merton, a partnership of agencies that work together to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse in Merton, are holding their annual survey. Each year we review what is important to people who live and work in Merton to help inform our priorities. Have your say on community safety by 15 October.

Supporting survivors of domestic abuse

Did you know that domestic abuse can be emotional, sexual and financial, as well as physical? If you are experiencing domestic abuse, confidential advice and support is available. Call Victim Support Merton Domestic Violence Workers on 020 7801 1777 or 999 if it is an emergency.
Don’t miss out
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